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Anglicans and Old Catholic meeting explores models of pastoral theology

by Markus Dünzkofer

(ENS) "Ecumenism at work" could have been the subtitle of the Anglican-Old Catholic Seminar that met in Oberplanitzing in South Tyrol (Italy) at the end of April.

Nineteen lay and ordained theologians--mostly from GenX and GenY--from both Anglican and Old Catholic churches demonstrated what ecumenical "Unity in Diversity" could look like. The focus of this year's agenda was on "Healthy pastoral care givers: Old Catholic and Anglican models of pastoral theology."

Unlike other ecumenical conversations, Anglicans and Old Catholics (of the Union of Utrecht) have enjoyed "full communion" between their two traditions for 70 years, opening the possibility for common worship, including daily shared celebration of the Holy Eucharist, and practical dialogues, focusing on ministry and pastoral care.

Participants came from various countries and churches, including the Old Catholic Churches of Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Czech Republic, the Netherlands, and Poland; the Catholic Diocese of the Old Catholics in Germany, the Old Catholic Mission in South Tyrol, and Christ-Catholic Church of Switzerland; the Churches of England and Ireland; and the Episcopal Churches of the United States of America and of Jerusalem and the Middle East.

A special treat was the participation of a member of
the Reformed Church of the Netherlands and two

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the Reformed Church of the Netherlands and two members of the Old Catholic Church of the Mariavites, a church that received apostolic succession through the Church of Utrecht, but is not herself a member of the Union of Utrecht.

The next meeting of the group will be in Prague in August 2002. For the 10th anniversary meeting, the members decided to chose the birthplace of Christianity: Jerusalem and the Holy Land. Conferences are open to clergy or interested laypersons from around the world.

--The Rev. Markus Dünzkofer is assistant rector of St. Matthew's Episcopal Church, Evanston, Illinois.

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